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Lt. COLONEL ANAND'S SUICIDE

Red Herring For MURDER?

(By A CORRESPONDENT)

ON the evening of the Second June, 1977, Lt. Colonel Tejinder Singh Anand told his servant Pyarelal that he did not want any dinner, and walked out of his Punjab Khor farm to his death.

Two days later his body was found near a cart track near his farm, his skull pierced by a .32 bullet fired at point blank range.

The Delhi police, aided by top forensic experts, have concluded that it was a clear case of suicide by a man who had been suffering from severe fits of depression ever since the catastrophic election results which annihilated his son-in-law Sanjay Gandhi and his mother, Mrs. Gandhi.

A closer examination of the evidence, statements, and published reports, however, bring out some glaring discrepancies and serious anomalies in the investigation, and the deductions arrived at on its basis. The whole thing smacks of a hasty attempt to provide a safe and uncomplicated solution for what might have been one of the most cold-blooded murders ever perpetrated.

COLONEL ANAND ; THE MAN

Let us take the man. An army officer of the British school, with the maturity and intelligence that are essential by-products of his training. He is also a Punjabi, a race where cowardice, moral or physical, is almost an unknown emotion. He is financially well off and except for his fits of depression, is of sound health.

Does it not seem highly incongruous that a man of his calibre and mature stability would take the easy way out of what, at the worst, may be considered an unforeseen political reversal? Even if the crushing setback to his son-in-laws' political fortunes did weigh on his mind to the extent that he decided to take this drastic step (whis is highly improbable), would he have been capable of the childish and highly melodramatic act of writing a silly and inane suicide note with the words : 'SANJAY WORRY IS NOT BEARABLE." and slipping it into his pocket before shooting himself? Even if he did want to explain the circumstance of his death, to avoid implicating others, would not a man of his IQ have written a more explicit letter, in less atrocious English, and devised a more reliable method of seeing that it reached the relevant authorities, rather than allowing it to be in his pocket, when he knows his body is going to lie by the roadside, vulnerable to any passing thief who might search him for something valuable, and mislay the note in the process?

THE ALL-IMPORTANT MISSING BULLET

Colonel Anand was killed by a .32 bullet fired from contact range. It entered his skull from the right temporal area, and blew a hole creating a gaping exit injury in the left frontal region of his skull. It was also discovered that the gun was fired at a slightly "downward angle".

A piece of the fatal bullet was found lodged in his skull. The bullet itself was never found, though the area was searched by experts with a fine tooth comb of metal detectors. Now considering the path of the bullet from the actual injury, and also assuming that Colonel Anand was a man of average height, if he shot himself in a standing position, the bullet would have made a slight downward angle of between 10 and 20 degrees, and definitely lodged itself in the earth within a radius of 30 feet. Allowing for deflection, which is highly improbable at that close range it should still have been found within fifty feet. And as for the, the theory that he shot himself in a supine position, one simply cannot imagine any man (and especially an army man) suffering the final indignity and discomfort of stretching out in the mud before taking his life.

These arguments strongly support the theory that he was shot somwhere else and dumped at the spot where he was found. The police assume this is not possible because there was copious bleeding at the site, and also because there were no blood trails leading away from it. But if he was killed in a car, and brought to the place, or even shot when he was sitting in the vehicle at the spot, that would explain all three mysteries; the missing gun the missing bullet, and the lack of signs of a struggle. And he would have certainly continued to bleed if he had been shot very shortly before.

The missing gun stinks to high heaven of skulduggery The only explanation possible is that some rustic passer-by pocketed it with profit as the motive. However it would take a courageous thief indeed to pry a gun loose from the fingers of a bleeding corpse, and more so when one considers the highly superstitious beliefs and ignorance of villagers in general. If however any truth may be attached to the servant Pyarelal's statement that it was the Colonel's driver Gurudev Singh who removed the revolver, that again raises a hundred other even more ominous questions.

Then again, there is the remote (though not entirely impossible) likelihood of the revolver having been removed *after* the body was discovered.

THE MYSTERIOUS NEWSPAPER PACKAGE

The farmhand Pyarelal's statement also includes a reference to a newspaper package which the Colonel "carried under his arm" when he left on his fatal evening stroll. Dismissing the possibility that no sane army man would even consider such a ridiculous method of carrying a gun (especially when he held a license to use one), the only other logical explanation is that it was not a gun at all, but something else that he carried with him.

Could it have been money, or something equally valuable, which the Colonel so furtively

(Contd. on page 7)

Open For Further Investigation

That there could be more to Lt. Colonel Anand's death than the suicide verdict arrived at was hinted by Mr. G. S. Mander, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Delhi, when he said that though on the basis of the evidence collected "so far" murder was ruled out, "We are still open for further investigations."

THUS SPAKE THE MAHATMA

Though God is in every atom about us, around us, and within us, He has reserved to Himself the right of becoming manifest to whomsoever He chooses.

ASOKA SCENTED BETEL NUT POWDER

Free India

SUNDAY June 12, 1977

UNNECESSARY AGITATION

The demands of Tamil Nadu Non-Gazetted Government officers cannot be called unfair. But they have chosen a wrong time to agitate.

Within a week a popular government is to be installed. The NGGOs must have waited till then.

Their demands include (1) enhanced D. A. on a par with central government staff (the State NGGOs ought to have fought for it long ago); (2) removal of stagnation (many highly qualified people are reported to be languishing without promotion) (3) appointment of a Third Pay Commission (there are rumours that the Governor may agree to this); (4) payment of Rs. 10,000 to each employee at the time of retirement (expected to cost Rs. 10 crores and the NGGOs are willing to contribute about Rs. 3 crores by a contribution of Rs. 10 each for every month of their service); and (5) dropping of the system of compulsory retirement (the new Janata Government at the centre has already sent some instructions to the State Governments on this subject).

No political party can afford to reject these demands as they have come from the most powerful section of government employees.

We do not know how a Janata Government will react to these demands if it comes to power by some fluke in the State. One of the Union Ministers has promised the electorate that in the States where the Janata is returned to power, sales tax will be abolished.

And if that tragedy occurs here, and the S. T. is removed as promised (the Janata constituents are not known for keeping poll promises), the NGGOs may not even get their present salaries regularly.

The other parties will certainly look into these demands with sympathy and grant them early.

OF THE SAME FEATHER

Morarji Desai has made it clear he would not stand any nonsense about strikes. This he gave out during his election tour in Bihar. And in Calcutta, as part of the same poll campaign, he served advance notice on Government employees that they would have to face retrenchment.

No strike but retrenchment — this is the considered pronouncement of the head of the Janata Party Government made in all seriousness, significantly during an election campaign in which normally the government of the day tries to put its best foot forward, understandably to win over the voter.

It looks as if the new Prime Minister does not regard the current state of working-class actions, mostly spontaneous, as anything more than the froth that comes up when a bottle is opened, as he frankly put it in his press conference last month. If this is his reading of the situation, then it is fair to conclude that Morarji Desai has little understanding of the mass temper in the country today.

FAILURE IGNORED

With his declared opposition to strikes and his threat of retrenchment, Morarji Desai has, with justification, earned the plaudits of Big Business houses which led by the Tatas, have made a voluntary gesture to the Janata Raj to freeze prices of its products till the end of the year. If there would be quid pro quo, it would be known only when Finance Minister H. M. Patel opens his Budget box later this month.

There is plenty of shibboleths in the Janata Leader's propaganda armoury — decentralisation, rural orientation, labour intensive projects, right up to what they pass off as Gandhian Socialism. For the new Prime Minister and some of his senior colleagues, these have become the stock-in-trade of their P.R. work before the nation. But with all this extra-anxiety for the village-folk, one has, in course of the last two months of the Janata in office, hardly heard them talk about the urgency of enforcing land reforms or the laws against usury — notwithstanding Janata Secretary Hegde's belated statement on the subject. The strongly worded Janata charge-sheets against the Congress Ministries have nowhere accused these Ministries with their shocking failure to keep their pledges to implement their accepted socio-economic programme for which legislative sanction had already been secured.

NOT A SURPRISE

Not that this is a matter of surprise. Prakash Singh Badal's commitment to the kulak is unshakable. And Chaudhry Charan Singh made his political debut on the all-India platform twenty years ago, when at the Nagpur Congress, he openly crossed swords with Jawaharlal Nehru on the resolution calling for the promotion of cooperative farming: the strident voice of the rich peasant against any move to help the village poor was authentically raised by Charan Singh at Nagpur. It was no accident that within a year the Swatantra Party was born with its rural programme unashamedly championing the village rich; nor was it an accident, again, when the Swatantra Party chose to merge itself in the BLD conglomerate of which Charan Singh has been the founder-leader.

Almost outshining Morarji, it is Charan Singh who has, of late, been stealing the limelight. The controversy over the letter, not the Election Commission on the Janata Party symbol need to be stretched too far and it is better to leave it where it was left by the new Prime Minister that "something had happened" — despite all the delayed-action after-thoughts of the Chief Election Commissioner.

More important from the point of view of national interest and national perspective is Charan Singh's calculated campaign to denigrate Jawaharlal Nehru. He started by blaming Nehru on the question of economic planning, a natural pastime for a champion of rural vested interests. Charan Singh has, of course, every right to combat any Cult of Personality: what is intriguing is that he has opened his guns only after installing himself in the Central Government. In his special interview last week to a widely circulated Birla-owned Hindi weekly, Charan Singh has candidly said: "The mistake on the part of Gandhiji was that he cast his choice for the post of Prime Minister in favour of Nehruji. If at that time we had got a leader who could be firm and of the national mould then India today would have been a powerful nation." It was perhaps Gandhiji's misfortune and naturally of the Indian nation that a person of the Charan Singh mould was not chosen in place of Nehru — thirty-year old deficit indeed.

The Janata leaders' conspicuous absence at the Nehru remembrance meet on his death anniversary thus falls into a well-laid-out pattern; rather Chandra Sekhar's presence at the memorial meeting might seem to be incongruous in this background surcharged with the Thoughts of Charan Singh.

There is nation-wide abhorrence today at the ghastly disclosures of unspeakable torture perpetrated on the Naxalites. What has to be borne in mind, as many of the Naxalite friends have rightly pointed out, is that this brutal operation began long before Emergency—even before the Congress split when Morarji Desai himself was Deputy Prime Minister and many of his Janata colleagues of today were part of the Congress establishment. On his past, Morarji Desai has bracketed the Naxalites with criminals, when he said in Calcutta that their release should be extended to jail delivery of all criminals.

But the Congress leaders of today are in no position to either expose such disturbing trends in the Janata leaders' current politics—from Morarji's diktat against strikes to Charan Singh's interdict against Nehru—or to exploit the later public abhorrence on these issues. Because they themselves had permitted such politics to be practised by the Indira-Sanjay Mafia under cover of Emergency; what is more, the Congress after the March poll debacle could not purge itself of this Mafia which, in fact, is holding sway over it.

This ominous unfolding of ideological-political proximity between Indira-Sanjay's Emergency raj and Morarji Charan's Janata raj, imposes urgent tasks upon all the like-minded forces of the Left. The Communists and the Socialists, together with Chandra Sekhar and his suppor-

(Contd. on page 7)

Janata Economy

The government has offered a prize of Rs. 30,000 for the architect who designs the best mausoleum for the late President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. The cost of the actual construction is expected to be a crore of rupees. This colossal waste of public money for a dead dignitary comes immediately in the wake of the Janata government's self-proclaimed standards of austerity. It would be interesting to calculate how many *living* slum dwellers would have been benefited with a roof over their heads for the same amount.

Contrasts characterise world commodity market

Sharp contrasts and wide fluctuations characterize the world commodity market, she Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has reported. Committee members, however held divergent views on what steps should be taken to bring about stability.

The CCP's session was presided over by Mr. George Magombe (United Republic of Tanzania), assisted by Mr. Andre Regnier (Belgium) as First Vice-Chairman and Mr. S.S. Mahdi (India) as Second Vice-Chairman.

Short supplies and high prices have characterized the markets for coffee and cocoa during the past two years and to a lesser extent for hides and skins, the Committee noted. A tightening of supplies had occurred in markets for jute, hard fibres, tea and oilmeals.

There was now a better balance between demand and supply in the markets for banana and rubber but grain prices had fallen. The world market for meat continued depressed and large surpluses of dairy products and wine continued to accumulate.

SUGAR MARKET

The market for suger had experienced a violent cyclical fluctuation from conditions of shortage in 1975 to surplus and depressed world market prices in 1976 and 1977.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE

The committee noted that the volume of agricultural trade had changed little following the market recovery of 1975. By value a slight growth had been recorded in 1976. The over-all export earnings of developing countries had increased moderately, but there had been wide fluctuations in the earnings from individual commodities as a result of price instability.

The "Group of 77" developing countries, in a formal statement, stressed the "poor performance" of their agricultural exports over the past two years.

It laid the blame on such factors as the "unprecedented degree" of price instability but also on the competition from synthetics and "the restrictive trade measures and support policies of developed countries."

DIVERGENT VIEWS

The developed countries expressed divergent views and one delegation reserved its position on some "complex and rather new suggestions" in the statement.

"STUMBLING BLOCKS"

The views expressed on the reasons for the slow progress were divided. Delegates from the developing countries considered that the absence of concrete results reflected a lack of political will on the part of most developed countries. Their reservations, delegates had constituted "stumbling blocks of progreess in negotiations".

Service

The Paris Le Monde reports a new type of service offered to motorists in the United States: a window in the wall of the funeral parlour, two metres long and one and a half metres high, through which the mourner can see the corpse without getting out of his car. Driving slowly past the window he can see the body lying in the open coffin under neon lights. He has only to stop the car for a moment and lean slightly out to sign his name in the book of condolences.

Brain Drain: Minister's Concern

Dr. P.C. Chunder, Union Minister for Education, said in Madras last week, that conducive conditions should be created within the country for the intelligent so that there was no brain drain. Though it was not an easy task the Government was trying to move in this direction. He said that apart from material facilities, job satisfaction was an important factor. Dr. Chunder was addressing the members of faculty, employees and students at the I.I.T., Madras. He said there should be clear balance between technology and humanism. Otherwise there would be danger from unbalanced technological growth. The real danger would then be from technocrats. He stressed the importance of carrying out a survey of the effects of technological advance. "We should see to it such advance did not do harm to the people. Institutions like I.I.T. should be the base for dialogues on this," he said.

I.I.T. ADMINISTRATION

Referring to the administrative problems faced by the I.I.T., the Minister underlined the need for healthy understanding, co-operation and partnership among students, staff, employees and the management. If everyone was reasonable, it would be possible to solve the problems, he added. Dr. Chunder said a high ranking officer who went into the problems of I.I.T. Madras had already reported to him and changes were in the offing. He promised all concerned that all the wrongs would be undone, provided there was good will and a spirit of give and take. He was confident that this prestigious institution would be placed on a proper footing.

Women Drink More Coffee

Mr. C.V.R. Panicker, Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu today inaugurated the Coffee Parlour of the Coffee Board, at the Tamil Nadu Government Secretariat, Madras. He said that this would go a long way in providing proper amenetles for staff for refreshments. He thanked the Coffee Board for having opened this.

Mr. M. Venkataratnam, Chairman of the Coffee Board, in his welcome address said that the Coffee Board would shortly introduce an element of self-employment concept in coffee promotion programmes. He said the Coffee Board proposed to start coffee centres run by enterprising educated youngsters, who would be trained in catering and management of restaurants. These centres would be in non-traditional areas.

He said that the Coffee Board had identified 13000 acres of new land in Salem and Madurai Districts, for a plantation project, which when completed would improve the economic condition of these acreas.

Shri. V. Balu, Director, Propaganda, Coffee Board, said that this was the 13th parlour in the country. The Board had 44 coffee depots and three coffee vans. This parlour would also demonstrate the correct method of coffee perparation. He also said that according to a survey of Coffee drinking habits in Madras, women drink more coffee than men.

Nuclear Power Remains Cornerstone Of Energy Policy

Atomic energy will retain the lion s share of the Bonn government's energy research budget, accounting for 4,500 out of 6,500 million deutschmarks earmarked for expenditure between now and the end of the decade. But Research Minister Hans Matthofer is quick to add that new designs such as the fast breeder and the high temperature reactor will not be given power station planning permission until safety and environmental aspects have been thoroughly probed. Thus reactor safety and radiation protection will continue to be given priority.

A further 940 million deutschmarks are to be spent on improving coal gasification and liquefaction techniques, while 570 million deutschmarks will be invested in alternative energy, for the most part harnessing solar and wind power. Energy conservation is another important item of expenditure: if the United States needs to save energy the Federal Republic of Germany is certainly no exception among industrialised countries in this respect. Between now and 1980 DM 490 million are to be invested in developing insulation techniques and harnessing process heat. Since sixty per cent of the heat generated at power stations is currently wasted, the energy conservation potential is immense.

Energy advisers to the Bonn government remain convinced that industrialised countries cannot dispense with nuclear power. Reprocessing spent fuel rods improves by between 25 and 30 per cent the utilisation of increasingly scarce and expensive supplies of uranium, while the development of fast breeder reactors could make the country independent of imported primary energy for several hundred years. So disposal of radioactive waste and recycling of fissile material will remain linchpins of Bonn's energy research programme.

—*Kurt Christian Loding*

$200 m IDA Credit for ARDC

A million farmers in India wil benefit from an agricultural project being supported by a credit of $(US) 200 million from the International Development Association (IDA), an affiliate of the World Bank.

The IDA credit will support the Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation's (ARDC) on-farm investment program over a two-year period involving a total of US $583 million. At full development in 1984, the project is expected to result in annual incremental production valued at US $367 million a year.

The IDA credit will assist in providing loans to farmers for on-farm development purposes, mainly minor irrigation but also for development of tree crops, dairy and poultry, sericulture, fisheries and several other agricultural activities. About £(US) 100 million of the credit will be reserved for small farmers who will qualify for preferential borrowing terms provided their income was adeguate to repay the loan over a prescribed period. About 175 million man-days of additional employment will be generated.

Recovering Land Lost To Deserts

Man is both the victim and the perpetrator of desert-spreading. It is not true to say that man has been a passive victim of adverse environmental trends in the dryland which make up one third of the Earth's land surface.

These are some of the conclusions reached by 15 case studies undertaken for the United Nations Conference on Desertification due to take place later this year in Nairobi (August-9 September 1977).

DESERT SPREAD

Another conclusion is that the rate of environmental degradation or desert spread—in the drylands, has quickened in recent decades, and populations have consequently become more vulnerable to this phenomenon.

The studies review the processes of desertification in different parts of the world and measures taken to combat them. The six main case studies analyze the process of desertification in three main climatic types: India and Niger (warm season rainfall), Chile and Tunisia (winter rainfall), the Indus Valley of Pakistan and the Tigris-Euphrate Valley of Iraq (irrigated areas affected by waterlogging and salinity).

The studies were carried out by the Governments with assistance from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UN DP). In addition, several Governments developed associated studies to look at desertification problems and solutions in these countries. Australia, Iran, Israel and USA have each produced an associated study, while China has prepared three and USSR two.

A HUMAN PROBLEM

Significantly, the studies conclude that far from being a physical process arising out of climatic variations, desertification is mainly a human problem.

Some of the human causes of instability can be attributed to the dryland societies themselves, particularly population growth which has led to increasing pressure on the environment. A general comment on the studies explains further: "This has everywhere been reinforced by rising expectations in living standards and by increasing technological means of attaining these in the short term. It is directly reflected in increases in the area of arable lands and in livestock number and in the removal of trees and shrubs from uplands and desert plains to meet the increasing demand for fuel and timber".

THE CONSENSUS

The consensus is that socioeconomic factors linked with physical causes contributed to the spread of deserts. For instance, most of the studies show cultivation has extended into marginal and pastoral lands, so confining larger number of livestock on an ever-decreasing size of pastures. This leads to overgrazing, reducing the grass cover below the point of natural recovery. Woody plants are cut down as well as uprooted for firewood in many of the countries studied. In Tunisia, some 7.0 tonnes of wood are removed each year and desertified cropland totals 12 per cent.

Man-made activities often affect the natural processes, so that trees are gradually replaced by shrubs, cacti and hardy plants, perennial vegetation is degraded or destroyed, soils become eroded or decline in fertility, and the water table is lowered as wells are dug deeper and deeper.

PRIMARY CAUSE

The irregular pattern of rainfall and drought is only a contributing factor-the primary cause is increasing human pressure on land. Even in the Sahelian region, lack of rain was not a primary factor of the 1968-73 drought, which was more the result of overstocking and expanding cultivation in marginal lands during short wet periods and socio-economic factors, linked with physical causes.

All the studies point to a number of common causes of desertification and possible solutions which could be applied to areas experiencing similar problems. For instance, in the mixed pastoral-farming areas more up-to-date methods of agriculture and livestock management are recommended. In some cases like Chile, land ownership systems need to be re-examined before proper land management can be introduced.

In areas affected by waterlogging and salinity, as in Iran and Pakistan, new irrigated lands, properly managed, are recommended. In several countries, tree planting is under way to prevent sand movement as in China, to serve as windbreaks as in the Goldnaya Desert of the USSR, to protect soil as in Niger, and to provide wood and reduce wind velocity as in Tunisia. Gas and petrol could replace wood as fuel in Tunisia, for instance, where alternative sources of fuel are locally available. In some cases monoculture should be discouraged and the economy should be diversified: commercial poultry farming in areas with easy access to towns as in Iran and Israel, fishing in Chile or seed growing in India.

VALUE OF TRADITION

A recurring theme is the value of traditional strategies for coping with the stresses and uncertainties imposed by the desert environment. Nomads in pastoral regions would do well to introduce a stronger commercial element to traditional techniques. It is, however, difficult to provide effective health and social services to such mobile groups, as the studies of nomads in India's Rajasthan desert and those of Tunisia and Niger reveal. Traditional techniques like crop rotation, low intensity of land use and social interdependence are upheld as measures to combat desert-spreading in dryland cultivated areas where population pressure is particularly heavy. Caution is advised when introducing mechanized methods in agriculture. For instance steel ploughs have damaged soils, in India, unlike traditional implements.

PROBLEM OF NOMADS

To minimize the competition land between nomad and cultivator, many of the studies suggest a more controlled use of the land, such as livestock management, on the one hand and improved farming practices on the other. Marginal lands — traditionally, rangelands where nomads live—should not consistently be taken over by cultivation, since this leads to a more rapid deterioration of the land than it would under nomadic pastoralism.

LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons learned from the studies represent a first step in the global onslaught against the process of desertification and will serve as useful guidelines for delegates when they meet in Nairobi later this year.

WHO's Massive Attack on Leporsy

A massive attack on leprosy under WHO's special programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) was reported to one of the main committees of the Thirtieth World Health Assembly in Geneva.

A report presented to the Assembly said leprosy remained in many countries an important public health problem. The total number of cases in the world is conservatively estimated to be between 10 and 11 millon. A rough breakdown by regions gives the following figures: Asia, 5.6 million: Africa, 3 5 million: the Americas, 350,000. In 1970, there were 2,877,481 registered patients in the world.

PRIORITY TO RESEARCH

Under the special TDR programme, priority is being given to two main lines of research, immunology and chemotherapy. Research in immunology concentrates on development of a safe and effective vaccine and on finding a simple diagnostic test for subclinical infections.

THE HOPE

Progress made over the past three years strengthens the hope that a vaccine against leprosy can be developed. However, a vaccine for large-scale application cannot be expected in the immediate future. One of the major research problems is the resistance of the leprosy bacilus to the sulfone drug, dapsone, the most widely used drug to treat the disease.

MAXIMUM INVOLVEMENT

These research programmes and other research activities are being developed with maximum involvement of investigators from leprosy endemic countries. In this connection, a regional plan for research in leprosy was adopted by the Regional Advisory Committee on Medical Research for the South-East Asia Region during its last session.

PLAN FOR DRUG

A scientific working group met in Geneva last April to finalize a standard protocol for chemotherapy, making it possible to determine fairly rapidly the most appropriate drug regimen for leprosy control services. Plans have also been made for drug development, including the identification of active principles in plants.

The report to the Assembly pointed out that, if the treatments available so far are not perfect, the progress that has been made is far from negligible. In some countries where it has been possible to mount well-organized programmes against leprosy, it has proved possible to reduce the total number of cases by as much as 75 per cent after 15 years of effort.

India was among the 18 countries which participated in a meeting of nature resources experts organised by the United Nations University, Tokyo.

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He Wanted His Dinner

The pilot flying a United Airlines plane from San Diego to Seattle took offence when the stewardess told him that because there were not enough victuals in the larder, she would feed the passengers only. He made an unscheduled landing in San Francisco on the pretext of refuelling and went off to have dinner. Returning an hour later and finding the stewardess gone, he told the passengers that he would take off without her. They went hungry.

The Press On Indira And Sanjay Gandhi

Every morning when I pick up the newspapers, my eyes refuse to believe what they see in print. The heroes of yesteryear are depicted as arch-villains of today. They were symbols of dynamism, grace and whatever else was good and progressive. The same people have overmonth become liars, frauds, thugs and murderers (yes, even murderers). And every week when I scan the pages of the two Bombay tabloids I marvel at the feat of acrobatics which they have performed in turning from passionate adulation to even more passionate denunciation. Until recently, one of them specialised in making worship of the Nehru family into a cult and affixing donkey's ears and dunce caps on photographs of Jayaprakash and Morarjibhai. Now JP has become the saviour and the saint; Morarjibhai has become Godlike enough to deserve a halo. It takes my breath away.

Before the Commissions of Inquiry tell us the truth, the press has let loose a wicked farrago of calumny which has already pronounced Indira Gandhi and her son guilty. Let me illustrate this with a few examples.

Soon after Mrs Gandhi ceased to be Prime Minister, there was an item of news on the front page of a prestigious daily about a reception at the Senegalese Embassy which was widely reproduced in other papers. It said that Mrs Gandhi's presence at the reception had gone unnoticed—how had the mighty fallen! It made a good story except that there was no truth in it. As a matter of fact, the Ambassador, having previous knowledge of Mrs Gandhi's coming, had received her at the gate, been with her throughout her stay and seen her off when she left.

Since Sanjay Gandhi is the main target of the pressmen's barbed shafts, I adduce two instances of what passes for "investigative, indepth" journalism. The report dealing with Maruti's sale of road-rollers made a great point that many State-controlled agencies had been steamrolled into buying defective machines and "officials who opposed the deal came to grief". According to this report, Border Roads bought 100, Haryana State 50. And so on. It went on to say that most of the 100 bought by Border Roads were "lying idle at Pathankot". As a matter of fact, neither Border Roads nor Haryana State bought a single road-roller from Maruti.

Even more incredible was a report in the most widely circulated daily paper on how a chemical called polymer supplied by Maruti to the Delhi Water Supply Undertaking had "caused disease". Polymer is a chemical compound which, when mixed with water, takes the impurities to the bottom and is considerably cheaper than alum used for the same purpose. Polymer can in no event cause any disease. When Maruti protested against this tendentious reporting, the correction was printed in an obscure page without a heading. And the figures cited in a subsequent letter were tampered with to tally with the story initially put out by the reporter. I can give many more examples of deliberate distortion of facts.

It is sad that when Commissions of Inquiry have been set up to sift fact from fiction our press should foul the atmosphere against people who may well be cleared of the charges levelled against them. It was this sort of character assassination by state controlled media during the Emergency that nauseated most people.. Can it be justified now? Is it fair?

—Khushwant Singh in The Illustrated Weekly Of India.

Air Services Agreement

An air services agreement between Government of India and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen was initialled last week in New Delhi.

The agreement authorises Air India to operate one weekly service through Eden to Adis Abbaba, Nairobi, Entebbe and Dar-es-Salaam. Similarly Alyemda Airlines, the Airlines of People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, will be entitled to operate one weekly service between Eden and Bombay via Bahrain, Doha and Sharjah.

The Indian delegation was led by Shri B S. Gidwani, Director General of Civil Aviation and the delegation of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen was led by Mr. Hassan Abdo Sobhi, Director General of Civil Aviation, Eden.

The delegation of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen also had talks with Director General of Civil Aviation of India, International Airports Authority of India and Air India to strengthen cooperation in the technical field of civil aviation including development of airport at Eden and maintenance facilities for their aircraft.

The Prettiest Stamp

An Italian 40 - Lire postage stamp, one of an ecological series, has been picked as the most beautiful stamp issued in the world for the last year by philatelists and journalists gathered at Naples on 8 May, for the 17th European Postage Stamps Exhibit.

This is the first time in all the years of the exhibit's history that Italy has come away with the honour.

The national postal services of 46 countries and the United Nations were representetd at the Naples edition. The official entries were flanked by a number of private collections displayed around the theme "Philately and Tourism".

Krill Rivals Lobster In Taste

Krill, in case you have forgotten, are a species of protein-rich Antarctic shrimp that used to be the staple diet of the whale. They are so small as to be barely visible but there are millions of tons in Antarctic water and they represent the last really substantial untapped supply of edible protein.

The trouble is, it tastes terrible, unless you happen to be inordinately fond of fish paste. Research vessels brought back a catch of 250 tons last year and Bonn Research Minister Hans Matthofer has attended several gala dinners intended to demonstrate how tasty krill can be, but initial attempts were not an unqualified success.

His perseverance now seems to have been rewarded. A club of amateur chefs and gourmets spent several months devising a mouthwatering krill menu that was recently served at a Bonn hotel. The menu consisted of krill salad followed by clear or thick krill soup tasting every bit as good as lobster, it appears. Then came krill pasties, Tierra del Fuego krill dessert and, finally, krill and pistachio pie with Calvadas and apple sauce.

Member of the gourmet fraternity which arranged the Bonn dinner are their own sternest critics, yet not one of them gave any of the courses the thumbs-down signal to indicate that it had not met with his approval. Rumour had it that Hans Matthofer was greatly relieved to see the back of the initial catch, but the fact is that research vessels are sailing south for more krill next October and that the second catch, like the first, will be processed in the laboratories and test kitchens of food manufacturers all over the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mother-To-Be Beware Of The Cat Bug

To avoid the possibility of contracting a common infection that could cause mental and physical retardation to newborn children, pregnant women should keep away from cats and not eat rare meat, two University of Victoria scientists warn.

The infection, called toxoplasmosis, is caused by a microbe commonly carried by cats and found in rare meat, which has been ignored medically in North America mainly because of a lack of information, according to Dr. K.A. Karim, an immunologist studying the disease in association with Dr. Trevor Trust, chairman of the Bacteriology and Biochemistry Department.

Karim says if a fetus is infected it will probably show signs of either brain damage, psychomotor retardation, epilepsy or eye and ear problems a few weeks or months after birth. Contrary to medical practice now, "pregnant women should be tested for toxoplasmosis as a matter of routine in their general prenatal checkups".

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FUN AND LAUGHTER

PRONOUNCIATION

An Irishwoman travelling by train in the U.S.A. was talking with a man in the next seat. In describing her holiday, she said that she had visited San Jose.

"You pronounce that wrong," said the man. "It's San Hosay. In California you pronounce all the J's as H's. When were you there ?"

The Irishwoman thought for a moment, then answered ; "In Hune and Huly."

* * *

DISARMED SPEAKER !

At a very special banquet the toast master, introducing the speaker with great fervor, stressed at length her years of faithful service to the club, and eulogized her ability and charm.

Somewhat overwhelmed, the speaker faced the audience.

"After such an introduction," she said, disarmingly, "I can hardly wait to hear what I'am going to say."

x x x

SUGGESTION

He had never been especially popular with his father-in-law, but he didn't expect this message from the old man, who was on a trip through Europe.

"Dear Son : On the other side of this post card you will see a picture of the cliff from which the Spartans used to throw their defective children. Wish you were here."

x x x

ASTUTE POLITICIAN

The politician was being interviewed by the press. One reporter asked. "Do you feel that you have influenced public opinion ?"

"No," he answered. "Public opinion is something like a mule I once owned. In order to keep up the appearance of being the driver, I had to watch the way he was going and follow closely."

x x x

HEARTY JOKE !

"People who drink too much coffee," said the teacher "get what is known as 'coffee-heart'" And men who smoke too much, get 'tobacco-heart.' "

A mischievous boy stood up and asked.

"Well Sir, if a boy eats a lot of sweets, will he get a sweet-heart ?"

* * *

MIND CURE !

The patient hobbled into the doctor's office, "Doctor, remember last summer you recommended I go out with girls to get my mind off my business ?"

"That's right," the doctor said "How did it work ?"

"Fine," the patient replied in a tired voice. "Now can you recommend something to get my mind back on my business ?"

TRICKY TICKER

Daughter : I know that soldier is the man for me, mother. Every time he takes me in his arms, I can hear his heart pounding.

Mother : Be careful dear. Your father fooled me that way with just a dollar watch.

* * *

POLITICIAN

Mrs. Barkloud breezed into a butcher's shop and gazed down her elongated proboscis at the clerk. "I'll have two chops," she said, "and see that you make them lean." "Yes, ma'am," replied the clerk. "To the left or to the right ?"

x x x

OBEDIENT KID

Teacher : "How many of you children want to go to heaven?"

All the children raised their hands except Johnnie.

Teacher : "But, Johnnie, don't you want to go to heaven ?"

Johnie : "My mother told me to come straight home after school."

x x x

USING SIR

Teacher (to new boy): "What is your name, boy ?"

Boy : "Billy Binks."

Teacher : "You must always say 'Sir' when addressing a teacher. Now, what is your name ?"

Boy : "Sir Billy Binks"

x x x

ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

A small boy at the zoo asked why the giraffe, had such a long neck.

"Well, you see," said the keeper, gravely, "the giraffe's head is so far from his body a long neck is absolutely necessary."

* * *

HANDS FULL !

An editor, being asked at dinner if he would take some pudding, replied, in a fit of abstraction.

"Owing to a crowd of other matter, we are unable to find room for it."

* * *

PERFECT HUBBY !

A man was being shown over a large factory. "That machine," said his guide, "dose the work of thirty men."

"Ah," sighed the visitor, "at last I've seen what my wife should have married."

* * *

BARKING LIBRTEY !

Two German dogs from Russian zone came over the line to visit their friends in the British zone.

"What's it like on your side?" asked the German dogs in the Biritish zone.

"Not too bad."

"Get enough to eat?"

' Yes, we get enough to eat ?"

"Get beaten often ?"

"No, we don't get beaten."

"Don't get beaten and get enough to eat ! Then why have you come over here ?"

"We wanted to bark."

Recruiting Them

Despite the millions out of work in the United States there are some professions in which vacancies appear to be hard to fill. Here is how one such profession is advertised on television. A grave-faced young man appear on the screen and tells a heart-rending story of how he found a battered child on his doorstep. The little girl's mother had gashed her with a can opener and pushed her through a glass door. He had tended her wounds and found a new family for her, and he speaks of his joy at having been able to help her. The young man disappears from the screen and a vice is heard saying: "That was a priest. What other work could give you the chance to do so much good ? Think about it and write us at this address...".

The sponsors of the ad are evidently not too sauguine about its appeal. According to the Wall Street Journal, it has been broadcast by 32 TV stations.

To Be Or Not To Be — Bitten

In 1976, says the British Post Office magazine Courier, 3,741 postmen in Britain were bitten by dogs. 'If you are attacked by a dog, kick at its head", it tells its readers. Such advice aroused furious comment from readers. One reader wrote : "Never lash out at a dog or kick it. If you are faced with a menacing dog, try to reassure it by talking quietly and keep calm. Don't panic. Leave quietly". The magazine was obliged to point out to dog lovers that it had spoken only of "attacking" dogs. Who'll get bitten next, we wonder.

They Didn't Get It

West German modernist artist Joseph Beuys was commissioned by Munich art collector Lothar Schirmer to product a work that would remind him of birth and suffering. Beuys took a child's bath tub, smeared it with margarine and stuck strips of plaster and pieces of cheesecloth on it. Schirmer added the work to his collection and exhibited it. At one exhibition the charwoman, unaware that the bath tub was an exhibit, cleaned it out and used it to cool bear. Schirmer sued the sponsors of the exhibition and was awarded 40,000 marks damages. With this sum the artist had no difficulty in restoring his masterpiece.

———

"Fleece Of The Month"

A new piece of sculpture has appeared on one of Chicago's squares. It is a 20 ton, 30-meter high baseball bat made of steel. Senator William Proxmire gave the sculpture his "fleece of the month" award for wasteful spending of the taxpayers' money.

———

Art Victim

"King Kong", the horror film about the giant gorilla continues to be "all the rage" in the West. An enterprising side-show proprietor at a fair-ground in Huddersfield, England, set up a semi-dark "horror room" and demonstrated his own King Kong. During one of the shows the monster broke through the bars of his cage and attacked the public. One of the spectators picked up an iron bar, struck the "gorilla" on the head and disappeared. Actor Mike Towell who was playing the part of King Kong needed six stitches in his scalp.

———

Enterprising Bank Clerk

Every week the same accountant called at the same bank to pick up a payroll of Rs. 1,50,000.

Bank clerk Josef Hessner, 22, studied the voice, mannerisms and signature of the accountant. He resigned from the bank in Stuttgart, Germany, took a job in another part of the town, and spent night after night impersonating the accountant in front of a mirror.

In suitable disguise, Hessner then presented his cheque for one and a half lakhs, and walked out with the money, which he did in a cupboard in his office.

But that night his new firm was burgled—and police found the money which the burglars had overlooked in his office. Hessner got 15 months.

Deft Definition

Asked to write a sentence each on Lalgudi Jayaraman and Mahatma Gandhi, a high school student wrote that one was a violinist and the other an anti-violinist.

———

An Obedient Car

A car designed and built by a New Zealander starts when he tells it to and stops on command.

The car backfires on demand, stops automatically at traffic lights, can make a driverless journey and stops if a child runs in front of it or if the car in front stops suddenly.

It cost Rs. 4 lakhs to build, and has a computer brain built into the boot and tuned to the tone of the inventor's voice. A closed-circuit TV camera in the back window shows traffic patterns of following cars, and if thieves open the door, a siren sounds and a coded message is transmitted.

From Page 1

Red Herring For MURDER?

took with him? An empty dry battery carton and a few old newspapers were said to have been found on the scene of the crime... just the sort of disposable and unidentifiable type of packing material which would be used to carry a large amount surreptitiously for questionable purposes.

Considerable importance has been attached to the fact that all the copies of the newspapers (dated April) carried reports of the declining fortunes and allegations against Sanjay Gandhi, Bansilal and his infamous caucus. It is most certain the Colonel had not carried these papers for a last-minute perusal of the unkind cuts fate had dealt to his son-in-law, as it was already dusk when he left the farm.

And the ballistic experts have also stated that one of the newspapers had a hole which was definitely caused by the trajectory of the bullet. This discovery gives rise to two interesting questions.

1) Did Colonel Anand raise the parcelled gun, newspaper and all, to his temple when he shot himself?

2) Or did he raise his hand, carrying the newspaper, in a reflex action to ward off a gun which was levelled at him?

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

The whole incident bristles with impossibilities and incongruities galore. Whatever the attempts of the authorities to project a credible picture of suicide, some questions may remain unanswered forever. They are:

1) Why did Colonel Anand, a man of means, who was always used to a car and driver, suddenly take off by bus to his farm? Did he want to keep his trip as discreet as possible?

2) Considering his unusual departure, and also the fact that he had not informed his family of an extended stay, how did they endure two days of his mysterious absence? Were they too in the know of the nature of his nefarious visit?

3) Who was the mysterious caller who tipped off a news agency about his death?

4) How is it that the local villagers and later the Malaria spraying team, failed to recognise the Colonel when they discovered his body, when he was by all means a very well-known and prominent figure of the locality?

5) How is it that there was absolute silence from his family regarding the missing revolver' when they should by all logical reasoning have known of its existence, and, after the news of the death, of its disappearance?

6) When pressmen contacted the Anand family late in the night on June 4, they were allegedly unaware of the tragedy that had overtaken them. Yet Gurudev Singh, the driver, alone with farmhands Pyarelal and Umed had already arrived in Punjab Khor village "to search for their missing master". Did the driver get some supernatural message of his master's death, that he should have rushed from Delhi without conveying any hint of his trip to the Anand family?

7) How did the police deduce that the empty dry cell carton had been used to carry "a small but heavy object", (implying that the gun was carried in it) when the weight of a dozen dry cells is easily more than that of a .32 revolver, and also the maximum sectional width of the gun can never be more than the 2½ inches which is the height of such cartons?

No doubt these questions may have very plausible and innocent explanations. But even a cursory examination of the possible answers at the moment points very strongly to only one logical chain of events that could have happened that fateful evening on that desolate field in Colonel Anand's farm. Even granting that it is pure conjecture, one has to admit that it is the only justifiable reconstruction of the episode under the circumstances.

Colonel Anand might have been worried and depressed. The election fiasco, and now the enquiry commissions against his son-in-law, Mr. Sanjay Gandhi. The alleged crimes of the past regime were being raked up, and the witch-hunt was on.

Colonel Anand had always been close to the Gandhi family. Could it be that he realised, or was tipped off, that his name too was on the marked list? If this was true, then the Colonel would have chosen the most practical method (remember his army training?) of dealing with the situation. And that would be to buy the silence of the person or persons who either held vital evidence against him, or held the reins of the hunt.

A large amount of money would have been involved, which the Colonel may have transported to the lonely and and convenient spot on his farm where he had arranged the rendezvous and pay-off. His family might well have known about it, hence their silence. An argument or complication might have cropped up between the colonel and his unknown contact, which culminated in his being shot to death. Or, on the other hand, the assailant might have decided that Colonel Anand in his present depressive moods was totally unreliable and a danger to be eliminated. And eliminated he was.

The suicide note could have been forged, or the colonel may have been forced to write it under pressure.

Somewhere, someplace there may be an evidently innocuous vehicle with a .32 bullet lodged in its facia or its body work.

Only time ...

ar...

ON THE RUN

Caught by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston mafioso Vincent Teresa, alias Big Vinnie, informed against fifty fellow members. Saving him from the vengeance of the mafia, who promised a $ 500,00 "reward" for his head, the FBI provided him with papers in the name of Charles Anthony Cantino and sent him to Australia. There he decided to prove his trustworthiness and loyalty. Once he went so far as to advise the Sydney Council not to allow gambling houses because they were centres of organized crime. The unsolicited advice evoked the displeasure of the city fathers. Prime Minister of New South Wales said in Parliament that Cantino was himself a gangster who had come to Australia under an assumed name and that he should be immdiately deported. Realizing that the mafia would now get him in Australia too, Teresa disappeared. Even the FBI does not know where he is.

Catching Up

The amount of alcoholic beverages consumed in Iran has quadrupled in the past five years, writes the Teheran newspaper KAYHAN. Ministry of Justice data reveal that 30 per cent of all crimes are committed by people under the influence of alcohol. The paper notes with alarm that Iran "will soon catch up with the United States in the crime rate."

—

More Modest

No sooner had the Lockheed scandal over kickbacks died down than another well-known American company, General Motors, found itself compelled "courageously" to confess to the same sins. True, admitting that it had systematically bribed highplaced people, including members of foreign governments, its guilt by claiming that it spent a much more modest sum on kickbacks: a mere $ 250,000 a year.

—

Why They Take Drugs

More than 20 per cent of the drug addicts hospitalized in Italy in the past year were students and school pupils, according to the Italian magazine "TUTTOSCUOLA", Public polls reveal that more than 35 per cent of them have at least once "tried" taking drugs. Besides "plain curiosity", they have been driven to use drugs by "bitterness" and "loneliness" and to "spite society".

—

Time Saver

Admirers of one Saudi Arabia multimillionaire consider him "last year's luckiest businessman." This is not only because arms-dealing is so lucrative, but also because "the time others spend travelling, I save by making my plane my office," the West German magazine Stern quotes him as saying. He often spends as much as 100 hours a week aboard his own Boeing-727, which besides an office complete with tel...

Rather Hard To Swallow

How had a couple managed to have six children in seven years even though their doctor had prescribed birth control pills?

When the doctor visited the family, the husband told him: "You see, my wife is a little scatter-brained, and I could never trust her to take the pills regularly."

"So, then, what did you do with the pills?" asked the doctor curiously. "I took the pills regularly," answered the husband.

This case was reported at a medical conference in Heilbronn, West Germany.

—

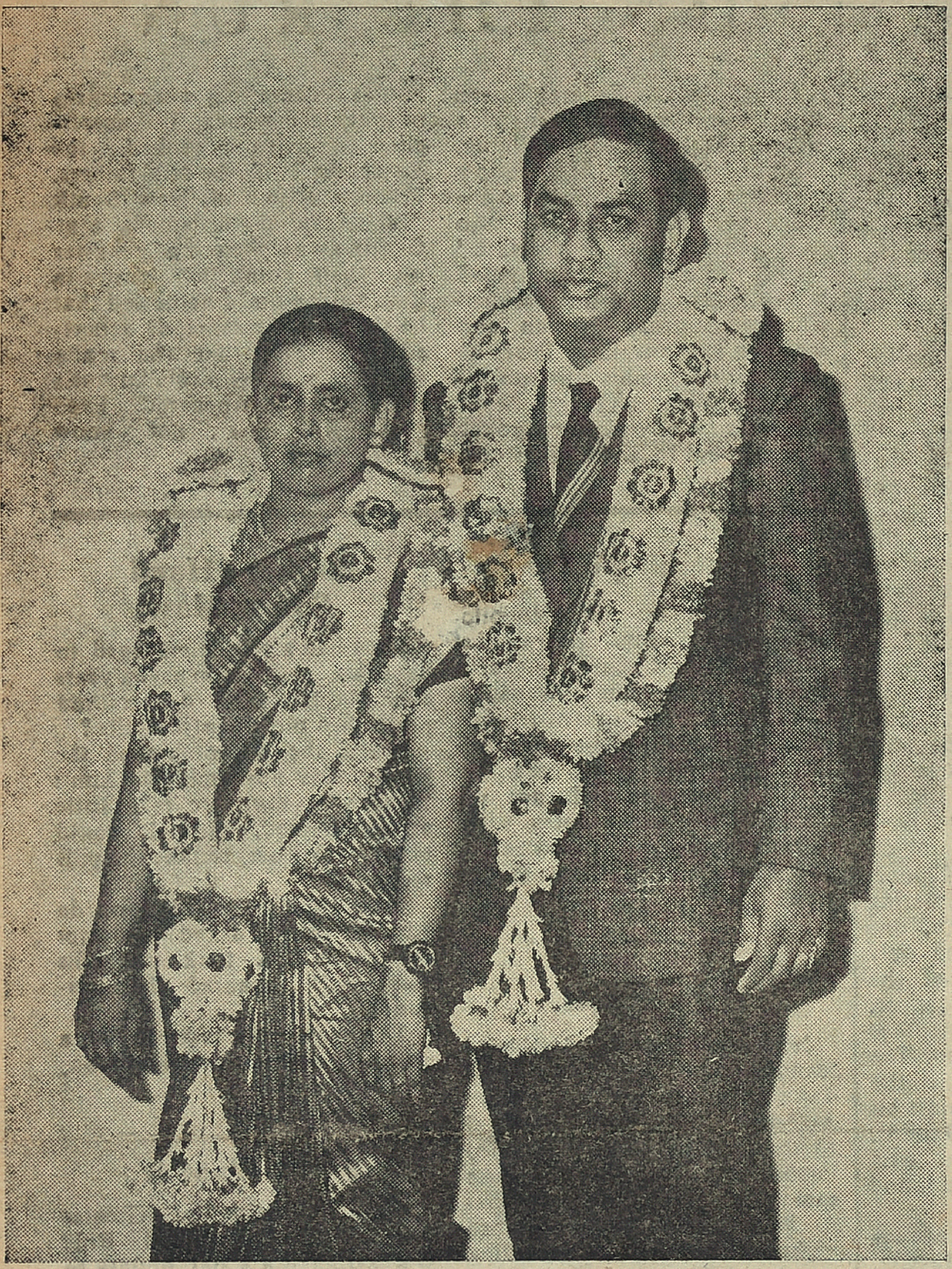
Didn't Want It

The Federation of Greater New York Pistol and Rifle Clubs offered a $ 200 bounty to shopkeepers who kill would-be robbers. The very first merchants named as recipients rejected the money. "These merchants obviously do not seek this kind of publicity," said Gerald Preiser, head of the Federation, and suggested the award be given to the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association's fund for widows and orphans of slain policemen. The police organization declined the offer too and proposed that the money be turned over to the City Hall. But a City Hall spokeman denounced the bounty programme as "sickening" and "reprehensible".

From page 2

ters—extending right up to those in the Congress who had stood against the Emergency Mafia—all have to come together to take up the mounting challenge from the champions of the vested interests. The war that began on the difficult terrain of Emergency, has to be carried forward through the tricky quick-sand that stretches before us today.

Democracy, to be meaningful, cannot run away from its obligations to the masses, the sons and daughters of the good earth tha...

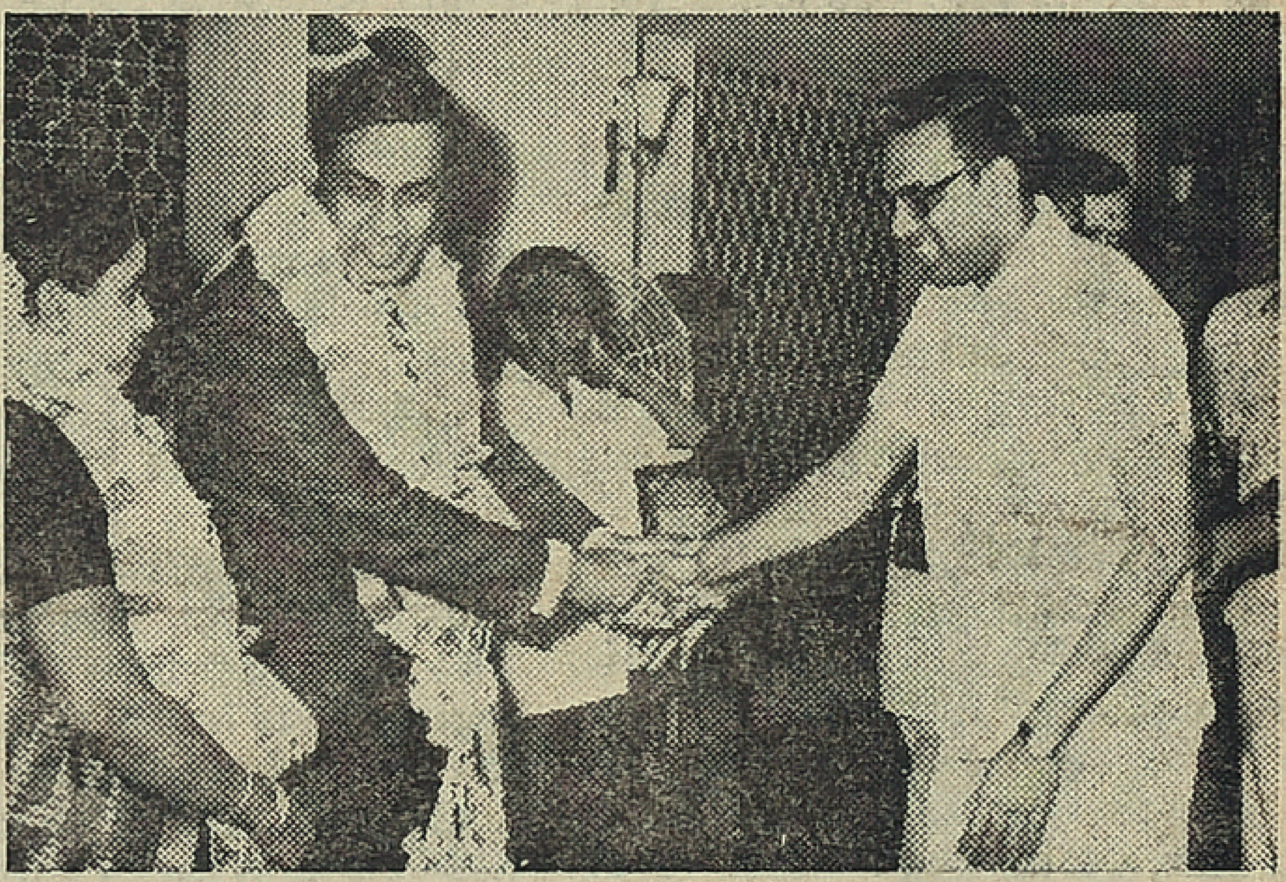


★

WEDDING

Industrialist—film producer S. Parameswaran married V. R. Geetha recently at Abbotsbury, Madras. The marriage in the morning and the reception in the evening were in grand style. In the evening many prominent film personalities—producers, directors, actors, actresses and technicians—attended the reception. Picture on the right shows Mr. Parameswaran with his bride V. R. Geetha. (Bottom Picture) Mr. A. V. M. Saravanan of AVM Productions is seen greeting the couple.

★



Magnificent Daredevil

The thrill-a-second throb and excitement of the drag-car circuit has most audiences in the grip of a nail-biting, edge of the seat frenzy, and this film which comes to the Anand is no exception. Racing car bugs will get their fill of the scream of super-charged engines and the glamour boys behind the wheels, and the thrills and the spills in their lives both on and off the track.

Gulliano Gemma of "Blow Hot Blow Cold" fame (or notoriety ?) is the glamour boy champ whose swinging life drags him out of depths, and lands him plump in the centre of a big-time drug racket. Gemma's girlfriend lands for a week-end of passion with him with all the eagerness possible in her nubile figure, as well as a suit case containing half a million dollars worth of heroin.

Gemma chain-smokes and makes love with gusto, little dreaming that he is going to wake up from a hangover accused of killing his dope-peddling playmate. The whole thing is, of course engineered by the arch-villain who runs an insurance firm and dabbles in racketeering on the side. One wonders however whether the insurance line needs much in the way of basic intelligence, for he spends over three reels of film, with his musclemen shedding blood all over the scene, looking for Gemma's car containing the heroin. The first step under the circumstances in a city like London would be to phone up the Metropolitan Police Pound... where it *is* found eventually.

True to the tradition of the Italian spaghetti studios, the director runs out of ideas after the first half an hour, and we are subjected to a series of unimaginative and wholly unneccessary chase scenes. There is car chasing car, cars chasing car, car chasing lorry, motorcycle chasing car, and men chasing buses. As the final straw there is a gawky Italian comedian chasing laughs...... which is really poignant because he never gets them.

One also wonders why they gave an 'A' certificate for this film. Free chocolates and balloons would have served better as an audience attraction.

—V.S.

Novel Business Idea

Until he was 65, Heinrich Luehrs made his living running a beer stall at fairs and exhibitions in Germany.

Then a barrel of beer fell on his foot, and while out of action, he spent the day looking at the people passing by.

He counted the number of people visiting the lavatory. He said later : "I realised there was more money in sanitation than in beer."

Now he owns nine mobile lavatories which he tows from fair to fair. He makes good profits charging people a small fee to ease themselves in comfort.

Jobless For The Army

A new way of combating unemployment was discovered by a delegate to the recent conference of the National Country Party in Victoria (Australia). He proposed developing and producing nuclear weapons and introducing universal military service. This will immediately decrease the number of jobless young people, he claimed.

The Exceptions

The British government has approved a programme for the switchover to the metric system by 1982 — miles, acres, quarts and pounds are to be replaced by kilometres, hectares, litres and kilogrammes. But the country won't go over to that system completely. The cricket ground will still be measured in yards and beer and milk in pints.

Read

FREE INDIA

Printed ... by G. Rangarajan at the Free India Press, 77, General Patters Road, ... R. Krishnamurthy.